



File Code: 1950

Date: April 29, 2019

## **Notice of Opportunity to Comment on the Schwartz Leff Mineral Withdrawal Project**

Dear Reviewer:

The environmental assessment (EA) for the Schwartz Leff Mineral Withdrawal Project is now available for public review. The project is intended to recommend administrative withdrawal of 39.6 acres of land along the North Fork Salmon River in Township 10 North, Range 8 East, Section 8, of the Humboldt Meridian from mineral location and entry to protect a historic mining site on the Salmon/Scott River Ranger District of the Klamath National Forest (Forest). The EA analyzes the environmental consequences of the no action alternative and the proposed action. The EA and supporting documents are available on the Klamath National Forest's project webpage at:

<https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=52610>.

The Forest Service filed an application package with the Department of Interior requesting it to administratively withdraw 39.6 acres of land from mineral location and entry for twenty years. The EA and supporting reports provide the required documentation for withdrawal application packages that will assist the Secretary of Interior in making a decision to approve or reject a withdrawal recommendation. After an initial assessment indicating there are no practical alternatives for resource protection, the proposed lands are "segregated" or closed for two years to filing new claims or plans-of-operations while the proposed area is studied to determine its suitability for withdrawal. The 2-year segregation period for the Schwartz and Leff mineral withdrawal started with a notice published in the Federal Register on July 27, 2017 (82 FR 34974); the 2-year segregation period expires on July 27, 2019.

The withdrawal application, which removes a ground disturbing activity (mining), provides a mechanism for protecting the integrity of this historic property. This property is one of few remaining intact properties representing local mining history. Administrative withdrawal from mineral location and entry is a management tool for protecting National Forest System (NFS) lands with special scientific, scenic, historical, ecological, environmental, air or water resources, archaeological values, or other special purposes from actions that could degrade those values (Forest Service Manual 2670). Administrative withdrawals allow for withholding of lands from certain laws for the purposes of maintaining or reserving the public values of those lands. Under this proposed administrative withdrawal, 39.6 acres of NFS lands would be withdrawn from operation under the U.S. mining laws, subject to valid existing rights.

We prepared this EA to determine whether withdrawal of mining activities at the Schwartz and Leff site may significantly affect the quality of the human environment and thereby require the preparation of an environmental impact statement. By preparing this EA, we are fulfilling agency policy and direction to comply with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). We are asking you to provide comments



that we will share with the Department of Interior, Bureau of Land Management, which will make a decision on whether or not to administratively withdraw these lands.

This project is not subject to administrative review (objection) pursuant to 36 CFR 218, Subparts A and B, because the Forest Service does not make the decision whether or not to withdraw the site. The Forest Service will accept comments on the EA for 30 days following publication of the comment period legal notice in the *Siskiyou Daily News*.

Submit electronic comments to <https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=52610> by selecting the "Comment on Project" link in the "Get Connected" group at the right hand side of the project webpage. Attachments may be in the following formats: plain text (.txt), rich text format (.rtf), Word (.doc, .docx), or portable document format (.pdf).

Written comments can be submitted by fax (530-468-1290) or mailed to District Ranger Ruth D'Amico, ATTN: Danika Carlson, Salmon/Scott River Ranger District, 11263 North Highway 3, Fort Jones, CA 96032-9702, or hand-delivered during normal business hours (8am to 4:30pm Monday-Friday, excluding holidays).

Comments received, including the names and addresses of those who comment, will be considered part of the public record on this proposal and will be available for public review (40 CFR 1501.7 and 1508.22; Forest Service Handbook 1909.15, Section 21).

For more project information contact team lead Danika Carlson at (530) 468-1225 or [dcarlson02@fs.fed.us](mailto:dcarlson02@fs.fed.us).

Thank you for your interest in this project.

Sincerely,



Ruth D'Amico  
District Ranger